

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1 1. (Currently Amended) A method for selecting a contact path between a
2 first member of an organization and a target individual, the method comprising:
3 storing in a memory one or more areas of expertise for plural members of the
4 organization; tracking network communications of the members of the organization;
5 analyzing the level of interaction between the members of the organization based
6 on the network communications to develop a people network;
7 identifying an area of expertise desired by the first member of the organization;
8 selecting a contact path between a selected the first member of the organization
9 and the target individual, the contact path including one or more members of the
10 organization having at least a predetermined level of interaction with the selected first
11 member and the target individual and the contact path identifies one or more members of
12 the organization that represent a proposed path through the people network for the first
13 member to contact a member of the organization having the desired expertise indicated in
14 the memory.

1 2. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 1 further comprising:
2 modeling the people network of the organization as a directed graph having plural
3 nodes representing members of the organization and plural edges representing levels of
4 interaction between members of the organization;
5 wherein analyzing the level of interaction comprises analyzing the edges
6 associated with the selected first member and the target individual.

1 3. (Original) The method of Claim 2 wherein each edge comprises one
2 or more weights, each weight representing a level of interaction for one type of network
3 communication.

1 4. (Original) The method of Claim 3 wherein one weight represents the
2 level of interaction for e-mail communication.

1 5. (Original) The method of Claim 3 wherein one weight represents the
2 level of interaction for instant messenger communication.

1 6. (Original) The method of Claim 3 wherein one weight represents the
2 level of interaction for telephone communication.

1 7. (Canceled).

1 8. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim [[7]] 1 wherein:
2 selecting a contact path further comprises selecting plural contact paths, each
3 contact path representing a proposed path through the people network for the ~~selected~~
4 first member to contact a member of the organization having the desired expertise.

1 9. (Original) The method of Claim 8 further comprising graphically
2 depicting the plural contact paths as nodes representing members of the organization and
3 edges representing the level of interaction between the members, each node and edge
4 having an appearance that corresponds to the strength of the contact path.

1 10. (Currently Amended) A system for determining a people network
2 representation of an organization, the system comprising:
3 a memory to store one or more areas of expertise for plural members of the
4 organization;
5 a communications network operable to exchange communications between plural
6 members of the organization;
7 a people network model module interfaced with the communications network and
8 interfaced with the memory and operable to model communications of the
9 communications network; and
10 an interaction level analyzer module interfaced with the people network model
11 module and operable to apply a model of the communications to the level of interaction
12 of the plural members to determine a people network representation; and
13 a target locator module interfaced with the people network model and the
14 interaction level analyzer module, the target locator module operable to accept a query
15 from a first member for members of the organization having a desired expertise and to
16 provide the first member with one or more target individuals based on the desired
17 expertise and the level of interaction of the first member with members of the
18 organization.

1 11. (Original) The system of Claim 10 further comprising a graphical user
2 interface operable to depict a visualization of the people network of a selected member of
3 the organization.

1 12. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 11 wherein the graphical user
2 interface depicts the a selected member's people network representation as plural nodes
3 interfaced with edges, the nodes representing members of the network and the lines
4 representing the level of interaction between the members.

1 13. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 11 wherein the graphical user
2 interface depicts the ~~selected~~ first member's people network representation as a bullseye
3 having the ~~selected~~ first member at the center and members of the organization
4 distributed in successive rings representing the level of interaction with the ~~selected~~ first
5 member.

1 14. (Original) The system of Claim 10 wherein the people network model
2 module is further operable to model the people network of the organization as a directed
3 graph having plural nodes and edges, the nodes representing members of the organization
4 and the edges representing the level of interaction between nodes.

1 15. (Canceled).

1 16. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim ~~15~~ 10 wherein the target
2 locator module is further operable to provide target individuals using a shortest path
3 determination to prioritize target individuals in order of strongest contact path with the
4 ~~selected~~ first member.

1 17. (Currently Amended) A method of using a computer system for
2 determining a target individual having expertise in a subject matter of interest to a
3 ~~selected~~ first member of an organization, the method comprising executing code stored in
4 the computer system for:
5 storing in a memory one or more areas of expertise for plural members of the
6 organization;
7 identifying from the memory members of the organization having expertise in the
8 subject matter;
9 selecting as target individuals only the identified members having at least a
10 predetermined level of electronic communication interaction with the ~~selected~~ first
11 member; and
12 providing the ~~selected~~ first member with at least one contact ~~paths~~ path to each of
13 the target individuals.

1 18. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 17 wherein selecting as target
2 individuals further comprises identifying members having contact paths of less than a
3 predetermined number of intervening members between the target individual and the
4 ~~selected~~ first member.

1 19. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 17 wherein providing the
2 ~~selected~~ first member with contact paths comprises:
3 modeling a people network of the organization based on communications of
4 members of the organization across a network; and
5 determining the contact paths by analyzing the level of interaction between
6 members of the organization.

1 20. (Original) The method of Claim 19 wherein modeling a people
2 network comprises representing the people network as a directed graph having a node for
3 each member of the organization, the nodes interfaced by edges representing levels of
4 interaction.

1 21. (Original) The method of Claim 20 wherein the communications
2 network supports plural type of communication and wherein each edge has a set of
3 weights, each type of communication having an associated weight.

1 22. (Original) The method of Claim 19 wherein the communications
2 comprise e-mail communications.

1 23. (Original) The method of Claim 19 wherein the communications
2 comprise instant message communications.

1 24. (Original) The method of Claim 19 wherein the communications
2 comprise phone communications.

1 25. (Original) The method of Claim 19 wherein determining the contact
2 paths comprises performing a strongest path analysis using the people network model to
3 prioritize target individuals.

1 26. (New) The method of Claim 1 wherein selecting a contact path between
2 the first member of the organization and the target individual comprises:
3 selecting a contact path between the first member of the organization and the
4 target individual, wherein the contact path includes at least one intervening member of
5 the organization between the first member and the target individual.

1 27. (New) The system of Claim 10 wherein the people network representation
2 includes a contact path between the first member and the one or more target individuals
3 and the contact path includes at least one intervening members of the organization
4 between the first member and at least one of the one or more target individuals.

1 28. (New) The method of Claim 17 wherein providing the first member with
2 at least one contact path to each of the target individuals comprises:
3 providing the first member with at least one contact path to each of the target
4 individuals, wherein the contact path includes at least one intervening member of the
5 organization between the first member and the target individual.